

12-1-1930

Address on Rom. 14, 7-9 at the Memorial Service for Mr. Erling Teigen

J T. Mueller
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mueller, J T. (1930) "Address on Rom. 14, 7-9 at the Memorial Service for Mr. Erling Teigen," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 113.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol1/iss1/113>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

Fuße, und das ist die Heiligung. Es heißt in unserm Texte: „Machet keusch eure Seelen im Gehorsam der Wahrheit durch den Geist zu ungefärbter Bruderkiebe und habt euch untereinander brünstig lieb aus reinem Herzen“, B. 22. Sind die Herzen durch das Blut Christi im Glauben von der Sünde gereinigt worden, so soll nun auch der Sünde fortan widerstanden werden. Da sollen die Wiedergeborenen tagtäglich ihre Seelen keusch machen, indem sie die ihnen noch innewohnenden bösen Lüfte dämpfen, alles gottlose Wesen überhaupt fliehen und meiden. Da sollen sie in ungefärbter, ungeheuchelter Liebe wandeln, in der Liebe, die da ist die kurze Summa aller Tugenden und guten Werke. So soll das neue Leben in ihnen sich zeigen. Und dabei ist zu merken, daß die Christen auch einzig und allein durch die Wirkung des Wortes dazu kommen. „Machet keusch eure Seelen im Gehorsam der Wahrheit“, sagt der Apostel. Nur die himmlische Wahrheit führt zur wahren Gottseligkeit; sie zeigt den Weg dazu und gibt auch Lust, Eifer und Kraft, ihn zu wandeln.

Ja, das ist das Wort, das unter uns verkündigt wird. Es wirkt Wunder der göttlichen Gnade. Es macht zu Kindern Gottes und gibt Kraft, als Gottes Kinder zu leben. Es errettet aus dem tiefsten Elend und versetzt in das höchste Glück. O was sind doch wir, die wir im Besitz desselben sind, für selige Menschen! Wie solltet ihr, werthe Glieder der Gemeinde, dieses Wort nicht liebhaben, jede Gelegenheit wahrnehmen, es zu hören, und gerne Opfer bringen, es zu bewahren! Wie sollten wir, die wir zu Verkündigern dieses Wortes gesetzt sind, unser Amt nicht hochschätzen und trotz aller damit verbundenen Arbeit und Widerwärtigkeit allerwegen vor heiligem Eifer brennen, es treu auszurichten! Wie sollten wir nicht alle miteinander geneigt sein, von Herzen zu seufzen:

Herr, dein Wort, die edle Gabe,
 Diesen Schatz erhalte mir;
 Denn ich zieh ihn aller Gabe
 Und dem größten Reichtum für.

Wenn dein Wort nicht mehr soll gelten,
 Worauf soll der Glaube ruhn?
 Mir ist's nicht um tausend Welten,
 Aber um dein Wort zu tun.

Amen.

(Fortsetzung folgt.)

E. Verner.

Address on Rom. 14, 7—9 at the Memorial Service for Mr. Erling Teigen.

Delivered in the chapel of Concordia Seminary, October 14, 1930.

ESTEEMED COLLEAGUES AND STUDENTS OF CONCORDIA SEMINARY:—

Again we meet in our chapel to mourn the death of one of our students, to praise God for the inestimable blessings bestowed upon him during his life, and to note the lessons which the Lord would teach us by this sudden death.

Christians mourn when their fellow-believers whom they esteem and love are called away. There is nothing in Holy Scripture to forbid us to sorrow at the graves of our beloved ones. In fact, it would be quite contrary to the principle of Christian sympathy to remain indifferent when the call of death comes to one with whom we are united in the fellowship of faith. Our own Lord wept at the grave of Lazarus. It is therefore proper that we should meet in our chapel for this special service to reflect in earnest and thoughtful devotion on the sudden, unexpected death of our brother, to remember in our prayers all whose hearts have been made sorrowful by his death, and to consider, too, what a loss the Church has sustained by the death of one who might have served the kingdom of God for many years. Were we not to ponder the great truths which God would teach us in this hour of sadness, we would sinfully disregard a duty clearly outlined in God's holy Word. Such indifference Isaiah rebukes when he writes: "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come," Is. 57, 1. It is ungodly not to lay to heart the death of Christian believers. As Christians, therefore, we deeply regret that our brother was called out of this life so suddenly, that one who had so far advanced in his preparation for the holiest office, the Christian ministry, should be prevented from reaching the goal, especially when that goal was so near, and that the Christian Church, always in need of faithful ministers, should lose his talents and services. Our departed friend earnestly desired to enter the ministry and serve the Lord in His glorious vineyard. It was not easy for him to obtain the funds necessary for his studies. To him attendance at college meant great sacrifices. Even during the last summer vacation he toiled to procure the needed funds, and for some time he intended not to enter the Seminary this year in order that the burden of expense might not fall too heavily on his parents and friends. Even after he had arrived at St. Louis, he wrote his father that he was sorry that he had come since, after all, his attendance at the Seminary involved a heavier expense than he had thought. But in his last letter to his parents he said that he was glad that he had enrolled, that he had learned to like the study of theology, and that the doubts which at times had troubled him were now being removed. Yet, after all, by the will of God he was not to be with us for a long time. Scarcely a month has passed since the opening of the new school-year, and the Lord has called him away to enter as we have every reason to believe, the perfect school of sacred theology in blissful communion with God in heaven. And he was called away unexpectedly, not by

any lingering illness, but by a fatal accident which allowed him no time to bid farewell to his relatives, to prepare himself for the end by special meditations, and to comfort himself in the Lord by the means of grace. As we contemplate all this, we certainly have reason to sorrow over the death of our friend and brother.

2.

Nevertheless, in this solemn hour we, too, praise God, the Lord of the dead and living, for the marvelous ways in which He mercifully led our departed student. In the text chosen for this meditation, St. Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, says: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that He might be Lord both of the living and dead." These words are applicable to all true Christians. All true believers in Christ live unto the Lord, who died for them and rose again in glory. Their life is a service of Christ, often in weakness, it is true, yet a true service nevertheless through faith in their divine Redeemer. So our departed brother lived unto Christ. For Christ's sake, that he might serve Him in His vineyard and proclaim the joyful message that Jesus died and rose again, he attended college and then for a short time, till the Lord willed it otherwise, our Seminary. For Jesus' sake he worked industriously to earn the funds which he needed for his studies. He lived unto the Lord now that he might live unto Him more fully and perfectly in the ministry later on. Of his faith in Christ we have direct evidence. Only a few months ago, in an argument, he was asked whether he was sure of salvation, and he replied: "I put my trust in Christ's redemption, and I know that cannot fail." Such expressions of faith prove that he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and that he put his trust for salvation solely in the vicarious satisfaction of our divine Redeemer. So, as we have every reason to assume that he lived unto the Lord, we may hope also that he died unto the Lord, that is, in true faith in the merits of Christ. And for this we praise God in this sacred hour though we mourn his early departure. We cannot understand the ways of God. We do not know why a student who has just entered upon the study of sacred theology should be called away. The occasion moves us to say with Paul: "How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord Or who hath been His counselor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To whom be glory forever! Amen." Rom. 11, 33—36. Yet we know,

too, "that all things must work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the First-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified," Rom. 8, 28—30. We therefore thank God because He called, justified, and glorified our brother in his life according to His eternal purpose and grace in Christ Jesus. His life was short; yet, after all, it was a blessed life, because by faith it was lived unto the Lord. In it God magnified His grace to His own glory.

3.

But should we not also consider the lesson which the Lord of the dead and the living would teach us by this sudden death? St. Paul writes: "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord." Does not this statement suggest to us for our lives a holy, sublime purpose? We live unto the Lord. That is true of us who have been called by God to instruct and prepare you students for His service in the ministry. We are here to make you willing and able servants of Jesus Christ. And we do our task well only when in your hearts we decrease while Christ increases. We teach you rightly only when we teach you to say: "For me to live is Christ." We do that which we are called to do only when we inscribe into your hearts the Word of Christ, the unfailing truth which alone is able to save souls. This work, so precious and holy, we do by God's will; and each semester and each school-year that we so serve God we owe to His unspeakable grace. Of that we are reminded in this hour. Our lengthened service is proof of the lengthened grace of our Lord.

"Whether we live, we live unto the Lord." That applies also to you students of Concordia Seminary. It is by divine grace that you are permitted to sit at Jesus' feet and hear His Word, not merely for your own edification and consolation, but that you may later on impart the holy Gospel of Christ to others. As you realize this great privilege, by which God has exalted you above others, you must cheerfully consecrate your time and talents to those tasks which are yours as students of Holy Scripture. That alone will steel you against the temptations which Satan places in the way of all who follow the Lord. That alone will move you to improve your time and to study with deep and abiding interest the heavenly wisdom, which Luther rightly calls "the wisdom above all wisdom." A life of faith dedicated to the Lord is a holy life, a precious life, a successful life, a worthwhile life. The world with its false criteria of values may not appre-

ciate it, we ourselves may not always estimate it correctly; yet as we live unto the Lord, we live as God desires us to live, and so only do we accomplish what the Lord would have us accomplish as good and faithful stewards of His manifold grace. Let us, then, as we contemplate the brevity of life and as we realize that our lives are continued from day to day only by divine grace, vow to God greater zeal and promise Him greater faithfulness, by His own aid and strength, so that both our life and our death may be consecrated to the Lord.

And there is a final lesson which the occasion would impress upon us. By God's grace our Seminary has during the past years enjoyed an excellent enrolment. We have had a large attendance of students, — a larger one than that of any other seminary in our country, — who have come to us not only from our own Synod, but also from others. Just because of this plentiful harvest of young men who are willing to labor in the Lord's field we at times failed to remember that each believing and consecrated student is a true gift of God. Many churches regard it as a matter of course that they should be bountifully supplied with Christian ministers. The death of this student of Concordia Seminary recalls to our minds how much the bestowing upon our Church of such men as it requires for its blessed work depends on God's grace. If we would have them, we must pray for them. Unless God gives them to us, we shall never possess them at all. So this occasion exhorts us to continue in sincere and ardent prayer on behalf of our Church and, in particular, of our colleges and seminaries that the living God might mercifully hold His divine hand over them, guard and protect them against all harm, bless the instruction imparted in His name, and make all things work together unto His glory and the abiding welfare of His Church. This is a last thought which this solemn hour suggests.

"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." May this be true of all of us who are gathered here this afternoon! "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord." That is God's own holy motive given to us for a consecrated life. "And whether we die, we die unto the Lord." That is God's own blessed consolation for us in the hour of death. "Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." That is our own confession of faith, our shout of victory, by which we triumph over death, the last dread foe. And as Paul, so also we build this our faith on the glorious fact that "Christ both died and rose that He might be Lord both of the dead and living." To Him, our exalted Lord, our only Redeemer and Hope in life and death, be honor and glory now and forever! Amen.

J. T. MUELLER.